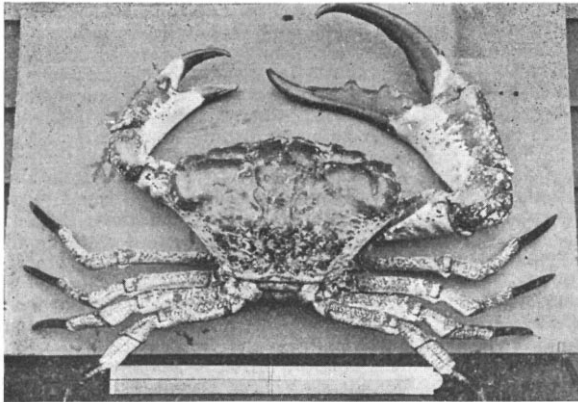


The belittling process, though unjustifiable, was understandable enough in those old days of controversy. To-day it seems rather uncharitable. C. SIMMONDS.
Thurlow Hill, West Dulwich, September 17.

A Large Tasmanian Crab.

I AM sending you a photograph of a large crab (*Psilocranium gigas*), caught in the Tasmanian waters during the present month. The crab weighed 30 lbs. It is one of the largest that has been caught in these waters. We have several specimens in the Tasmanian Museum weighing from 16 to 22 lbs. They



are generally caught by the fishermen in very deep water, from fifteen to thirty fathoms, while fishing for the fish known as the Tasmanian Trumpeter (*Latris hecateia*).

I shall be glad to know whether readers of NATURE have ever known of a larger *Psilocranium gigas* having been caught. ALEX. MORTON.

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, July 30.

Large Puff Balls.

HAVING seen in some papers lately notices of large puff balls, it may probably be of interest to record the measurements of one far exceeding in size any I ever heard of.

It was found by my daughter, Mrs. Pole-Carew, in a small park belonging to me near this place, where she is residing. I took careful measurements of it at the time it was found, of which I send you a copy.

It differed in no respect except size, either inside or out, from the ordinary smooth puff ball.

Measurements of a large Puff Ball found in Chipley Park, near Wellington, Somerset, June 12, 1900.

Horizontal circumference	57 inches
Vertical ditto, greatest	51 "
" " smallest	46 "
Height	14 "
Greatest width	18½ "
Smallest "	17 "
Weight	14 lb. 10 oz.

W. A. SANFORD.

Nynehead Court, Wellington, Somerset, September 11.

"A Tour through Great Britain in 1727."

Is not the "Tour" queried by your reviewer (p. 417, column 2) that of Defoe, which has frequently been reprinted? and yet the first edition (1724-27) is still the best, in spite of re-editors and its extension from three vols. to four.

Ulverston.

S. L. PETTY.

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PROF. HENRY SIDGWICK.

THE death of Henry Sidgwick entails the removal of one of the most potent influences that have been felt in Cambridge for the last forty years. Only a brief allusion can be made here to the time and energy which he devoted to University affairs, and to the constant and generous aid given by him to departments handicapped by poverty. As one of the strongest leaders in University policy, his power depended on a practical insight and decision of view for which those who know him only through his writings would be unlikely to credit him.

He was born in 1838. His father, the Rev. William Sidgwick, was headmaster of the Skipton Grammar School. Having been at Rugby under Dr. Goulburn, he entered Trinity College in October 1855. In 1859 he took his degree as Senior Classic and 33rd Wrangler, was elected to a Trinity Fellowship, and soon afterwards appointed Lecturer in Classics and Assistant Tutor. His interest in literary criticism and in problems of practical ethics was indicated, at this early stage, by various minor writings, of which we may specially mention an article on "The Prophet of Culture" (*Macmillan's Magazine*, 1867), in which he made a very characteristic examination of Matthew Arnold's closing lecture at Oxford. In 1868 was founded a Society, called "The Free Christian Union," of which Sidgwick was vice-president. His famous essay on "The Ethics of Conformity and Subscription" (1870) was written at the Society's request. This period of his life culminated in 1869 in the determination to give up his Trinity Fellowship on the ground that he no longer believed in the explicit creed to which the holders of Fellowships were required to subscribe under the old system of "tests." This action of Sidgwick's and the similar acts of some of his friends and contemporaries were undoubtedly important forces in the promotion of the abolition of the tests. Not long after, Sidgwick was made Lecturer and Examiner in the Moral Sciences, and later, Prælector in Moral and Political Philosophy at Trinity. In 1881 he was elected to an Honorary Fellowship there, and in 1883 he succeeded Birks in the Knightbridge Professorship of Moral Philosophy, which he resigned at the beginning of his illness last June.

As a teacher, Sidgwick exerted a profound and enduring influence, largely due to the extraordinary patience and quick perception with which he recognised and criticised the efforts of his pupils at independent thought. He presented to them an ideal of conscientious thoroughness in the pursuit of speculative truth, which has impressed and inspired even those who have developed their thought in directions far removed from his own.

Sidgwick's most important work, "The Methods of Ethics," was published in 1874 (2nd ed., 1877; 3rd, 1884; 4th, 1890; 5th, 1893). Its purpose is unlike that of most other modern works in philosophy. Not aiming directly at the construction of an ethical system, it adopts rather the Socratic method of stimulating the plain man to examine his own principles, and by self-criticism to free them from vagueness, obscurity and inconsistency. By many readers the unimpassioned, elaborately reasoned, judiciously balanced criticism is found unprofitable. But its penetrating subtlety and breadth of view are characteristics which have been recognised by all who have come under its influence, and have won for it a place amongst the philosophical classics. In general spirit it carries on the tradition of English common-sense empiricism; and, while to Sidgwick all forms of transcendentalism were repellent, yet unlike many of his predecessors in English philosophy, his criticism of opposed schools of thought was always keen and thoroughly scholarly. A different side of Sidgwick's intellectual character is shown in his work on "Practical Ethics," a collection of essays and addresses (1898), in which his speculations are applied to the very definite solution of actual problems of conduct in modern life.